United Nations A/58/152

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2003

Original: English

Fifty-eighth session
Item12 of the preliminary list*
Report of the Economic and Social Council

The role of public administration in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

At its fifty-seventh session the General Assembly, by its resolution 57/277, requested the Secretary-General to submit a follow-up report at its fifty-eighth session on the role of public administration in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Pursuant to this request, international organizations and bodies were invited to provide information on (a) initiatives undertaken that are aimed specifically at improving the capacity of the public sector of Member States to meet the Millennium Development Goals; and (b) innovative and successful practices that contributed directly to these goals. The information collected so far reveals five areas of interventions that are conducive to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, namely, (i) decentralization; (ii) transparency and accountability; (iii) "engaged governance" or mainstreaming citizens' voices in public policy; (iv) the application of information and communication technology (ICT); and (v) capacity-building in the area of statistics. The first four reforms reinforce each other to transform traditional public administration into a public sector that emphasizes participation, partnership and openness. The capacity-building in statistics is a cross-cutting need. To help replicate best practices, the United Nations will, on a regular basis, document these practices for knowledge transfer, and at the same time, offer limited technical and advisory services to Member States for capacity-building.

* A/58/50/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

03-42854 (E) 040803

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–2	3
II.	United Nations programmes and bodies	3–25	3
	A. Department of Economic and Social Affairs	3–20	3
	B. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	21–22	7
	C. United Nations Human Settlements Programme	23–25	7
III.	United Nations regional commissions	26–53	8
	A. Economic Commission for Africa	26–31	8
	B. Economic Commission for Europe	32–38	9
	C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	39–47	10
	D. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	48–53	12
IV.	United Nations specialized agencies	54–72	13
	A. International Labour Organization	54–58	13
	B. World Bank	59–65	14
	C. International Monetary Fund	66–72	16
V.	Innovations and areas of common interest	73–78	18
VI.	Conclusions and recommendations	79–81	19

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-seventh session, the General Assembly reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the role of public administration in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/57/262-E/2002/82). It subsequently adopted resolution 57/277, which requested the Secretary-General to submit a follow-up report on the topic at its fifty-eighth session. Pursuant to this request, international organizations and bodies were invited to provide information on (a) initiatives undertaken that are important for improving the capacity of the public administration of Member States to meet the Millennium Development Goals; and (b) innovative and successful practices that have made a difference and contributed directly to capacity-building.

2. A large number of international agencies, both United Nations as well as those of the non-United Nations system, responded to the request. These are: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In addition, valuable contributions were received from two international organizations that are cooperating with DESA. These contributions are summarized below.

II. United Nations programmes and bodies

A. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

3. One of the most critical issues emerging from the Millennium Declaration and from other United Nations conferences has been the central role of governance in increasing the access of services to the vast majority of the poor, enforcing human rights legislation, enhancing the participation of women in the development process, and protecting the quality of the environment. It is widely recognized that where governance is strongest and most transparent, poverty is neither as widespread nor as oppressive. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) has directed attention to emerging issues in governance and public administration by focusing intergovernmental debate more sharply on governance and public administration and by encouraging exchange of information on successful practices. Two international agencies that are cooperating with DESA — the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) and the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) — also assist Governments in their efforts to improve governance and reform public administration.

Strengthening institutions and governance systems

4. In their search for better performance, Governments around the world are seeking alternatives that will help make institutions more participatory, more decentralized, and more responsive to the needs of local, regional and global societies. In many countries, policy-making now involves local people and a wide

spectrum of stakeholders, and is no longer a monopoly of the central Government or a small number of public sector institutions. DESA supports these efforts by encouraging participation of representatives of central Governments, local governments, the private sector and civil society at global, regional, national and local levels in seminars, conferences, workshops and other types of meetings. The Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, which took place in Marrakech, Morocco in December 2002, and was organized by the Government of Morocco with the support of DESA, is a typical example.

5. The challenge of attracting, developing, utilizing and retaining capable staff in the public sector is central to the effectiveness of Governments everywhere. The United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration emphasized this point at its first session in New York (22-26 July 2002) [see below]. The Committee also judged the first World Public Sector Report, on "Globalization and the State", to be a valuable policy tool that could contribute greatly to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Committee reiterated this judgement at its second session (New York, 7-11 April 2003) and asked DESA to continue the periodic publication of the World Public Sector Report, concentrating on emerging topics highlighted by the Committee.

6. An effective public service is indispensable to achieve efficiency in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programmes related to the Millennium Development Goals. In recent years and in many countries, public service seems to have become a less attractive proposition for new talented job seekers. To face this challenge, a number of countries are attempting to revamp the public service in order to attract and retain the best talent. African countries adopted 23 June as Public Service Day and the United Nations followed suit by adopting the same date as Public Service Day. The introduction of the United Nations Public Service Awards is yet another of the efforts to uplift the image of the public service.

7. Many countries have embraced decentralized governance as a structural and practical arrangement for empowering local communities to fight poverty, poor health and illiteracy, etc. Decentralization is seen increasingly as an instrument for political empowerment of the people, a platform for sustainable democratization, and an initiative for effective and people-friendly service delivery. During the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on "Innovations in Governance and Public Administration for Poverty Reduction" held in February 2003 in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, decentralized governance for people's empowerment received due attention as a strategy for poverty reduction.

Managing knowledge

8. In order to help Member States to meet their obligations under the Millennium Declaration, DESA has focused on the new imperatives of the knowledge society and seeks to support Governments in capturing the benefits of the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration through the development of e-government, national knowledge systems and knowledge management within government.

9. E-government is a useful tool for pursuing public administration reform, good governance and broader socio-economic objectives. To maximize benefits and minimize chances of failure, DESA is developing a set of policy notes and reports on current and cutting-edge e-government issues, as well as producing analytical

tools, based on global lessons and the Department's own experience with technical cooperation and advisory services.

10. Recent developments in information and communication technology (ICT) have opened Africa up to new possibilities for public administration in particular, and governance in general. The e-Africa Commission of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which focuses on a range of areas pertinent to ICT implementation from policy to e-applications, illustrates the importance given to improving the capacity of African States to function more effectively through the use of ICT. Taking advantage of this trend, DESA, in partnership with the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD) and NEPAD, launched the e-Africa initiative (www.e-africa.org.za and www.unpan.org/e-africa2002) and organized the "First Regional Workshop on Building e-Governance Capacity in Africa" in Johannesburg, South Africa (28-31 October 2002).

Building capacity in socio-economic governance

11. Although the Department's work concerns reform-oriented advocacy, dialoguing and information exchange, DESA through its selective technical cooperation activities is also attempting to strengthen public administration to make it more engaging and people-oriented. In this respect, the following four projects merit special attention because they focus almost entirely on new initiatives in capacity-building for socio-economic governance.

12. In Sri Lanka (Achieving the Millennium Development Goals — Project SRL/03/002), DESA in partnership with UNDP is helping the Monitoring and Progress Review Division of the Ministry of Policy Development and Implementation to transform itself into a centre of excellence for poverty-oriented policy dialoguing, information exchange and monitoring, largely to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

13. The Government of Burkina Faso (Towards A Synthesis of Development Initiatives — Project BKF/00/001) invited agencies of the United Nations system, including UNDP and DESA, to formulate a project intended to build capacities in the area of socio-economic governance and, in particular, to build public sector capacity for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. National institutions will be helped to (i) create systems for monitoring and analysing poverty; (ii) prepare a national long-term perspective study to better reflect concerns of the Millennium Declaration; and (iii) assist individual ministries to upgrade their own capacities for poverty reduction, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and support for the Millennium Development Goals.

14. DESA supported the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) — a civil society network in South Asia — in drafting and implementing the South Asian Citizen's Social Charter. The Centre is a major civil society association that promotes regional cooperation among its members and attempts to link up the governments with citizens' perspectives on key policy matters. DESA's support is expected to strengthen the dialoguing process between citizens and Governments and help introduce the concept of "engaged governance" as a regular methodology in development management.

15. Preparatory Assistance for Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa (Project RAF/02/010), undertaken by DESA jointly with UNDP, supports the formulation of

a project on Economic Policy for Poverty Reduction in sub-Saharan Africa. The main purpose of the preparatory phase of the assistance is twofold. First, to identify entry points for stakeholders who can then support national Governments in their struggle to reduce poverty; and second, to identify civil society institutions that are engaged in policy research in sub-Saharan Africa and can work with the United Nations system as partners in implementing the project. Hence, the project's primary objectives are both capacity-building, and partnering with sub-Saharan research institutions to find new approaches to poverty reduction.

Meeting special needs

16. In 1980, member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) created the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), as a regional intergovernmental organization to assist Governments in upgrading their managerial capabilities for public policy analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public sector reform programmes. Cooperation with DESA has significantly contributed to the institutional strengthening of CARICAD as the specialized agency of CARICOM for public administration and development management. The regular forum by which ministers of Government, senior managers in public and private sectors, civil society organizations, academia, donors and development agencies exchange experience has facilitated a transfer of the knowledge, awareness and skills that are necessary for the development of Caribbean public institutions that play a vital role in reaching the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

17. Within a technical cooperation programme funded by the Government of Italy, CARICAD has organized, with the assistance of DESA, a series of consultations: Trinidad and Tobago (May 2000, on The State in the Third Millennium — Capacity-Building for Small Caribbean States in Public Administration, Governance and Regional Cooperation); Rome, Italy (October 2000, on Best Practices and Innovative Experience in Capacity-Building and Development Cooperation); Jamaica (December 2001, on E-Government, Information and Communication Technologies in Public Sector Management); and Grenada (January 2003, on Strategies for E-Government). These four consultations have served to advance the awareness and commitment of senior management in member countries with regard to public sector reform and administrative restructuring.

Partnership for capacity-building in decentralization

18. The United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) in Nagoya, Japan has a mandate to support capacity-building for regional development planning and implementation in developing countries. DESA supports the operations of UNCRD, which was created in 1971 by an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Japan.

19. UNCRD projects strengthen central and local governments in developing countries, to improve service delivery at the local level. The Centre's thirty-first International Training Course in Regional Development (ITC), for example, upgrades the skills of mid-level professional staff from the public sector of a number of developing countries. In Namibia, in collaboration with partner organizations, UNCRD organized a series of successful training workshops that have built a core capacity in key areas of the Government's decentralization programme. In Colombia, UNCRD actively supports the Bogota-Cundinamarca Regional Planning

Board in the implementation of a project to provide the population — especially the most vulnerable — with access to social services. Currently in its third year, the project has attracted the attention of other institutions in Colombia and other Latin American countries.

20. UNCRD, in collaboration with the Government of Malaysia, organized a training course in information and communication technologies (ICT) to strengthen the national capacity of African countries. This successful case of South-South cooperation improved the skills and knowledge of participants in ICT development and applications. By close observation of Malaysia's experience with ICT application, participants were able to (a) better appreciate the potential of ICTs for strengthening national capacity for socio-economic development; (b) identify essential preconditions for successful adoption of ICTs; and (c) identify barriers to ICT application and the policy measures required to address them.

B. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

21. The technical assistance and capacity-building work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) seeks to help the public sector to strengthen the institutional and human resource infrastructure in the area of trade and commerce. This work primarily impacts Ministries of Trade and Foreign Affairs, and spans a number of projects, including the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme to Selected Least Developed and Other Developing Countries (JITAP), the Africa project, World Trade Organization (WTO), accession-related projects and commercial diplomacy. JITAP I, executed jointly by UNCTAD, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC), was launched in 1996 to develop capacities to understand and to address the results of the then recently concluded Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

22. UNCTAD is particularly active in Goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals — a global partnership for development. UNCTAD's Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) Programme seeks to strengthen the debt-management capacity of debt offices in developing and transition economies. A major goal is implementation of a standard computerized debt-management system for the recording, monitoring and analysis of public debt in debt offices in Ministries of Finance and/or central banks. Civil servants receive training and assistance in the effective use of the system, enabling them to establish a complete and up-to-date debt database, to provide timely and accurate debt statistics and to undertake appropriate debt analysis.

C. United Nations Human Settlements Programme

23. As the United Nations focal point for monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Declaration target of "improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020" (goal 7, target 11), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is implementing campaigns, global programmes, regional and technical cooperation projects, and other initiatives to improve public administration in cities, with the ultimate goal of improving the lives of slum dwellers. In the Secretary-General's Road Map (A/56/326), strategies to further the "Cities Without Slums" target include ensuring support from the international

community for the provision of basic social services, such as safe water and sanitation, to the urban poor; ensuring the development of integrated and participatory approaches to urban environmental planning and management; and ensuring good urban governance and planning by forging public-private partnerships.

24. UN-Habitat launched two global campaigns to contribute to the reduction of urban poverty: the Global Campaign on Urban Governance and the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure. Good urban governance and security of tenure are recognized in the Road Map as necessary to respond to the challenge of "Cities Without Slums". National campaigns have been launched in Nigeria, India, the Philippines, Jamaica and Namibia. New campaigns are being prepared in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Uganda, Morocco, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal, Fiji, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, the West Asia Region (with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia), and Southeast Europe.

25. UN-Habitat produces the *Global Report on Human Settlements*, a biennial appraisal of the state of human settlements in the world, and the biennial *State of the World's Cities* report, which focuses on emerging urban issues and trends. Both reports contain a wealth of information on the status of public administration reform at the local level. Its "Guide to Monitoring Target 11: improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers" provides a practical approach towards measuring progress to meet this target.

III. United Nations regional commissions

A. Economic Commission for Africa

26. The Economic Commission for Africa's (ECA) overarching goal in the governance area is to create and sustain capable States that are supportive of broad-based growth, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

27. A comprehensive set of indicators in three research instruments are currently being administered in about 30 African countries. These indicators capture major data on governance, including political representation, institutional effectiveness and accountability, economic management, and corporate governance. Highlighting and distilling best practices at the country level allows the presentation of a comparative, comprehensive and global picture of good governance in Africa. More importantly, this work helps to identify capacity and institutional gaps, and provides policy makers with the information required for requisite intervention strategies.

28. A report on "Ethics and accountability for enhanced public service delivery" was presented as a working document to the second session of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society organized by ECA in May 2003. The report provides guidelines for effective service delivery systems in Africa, and supports the strengthening of ethics and accountability in the public services. The document describes best practices, especially those that relate to ethics and accountability, in other developing regions that can provide lessons for application in Africa.

29. A study on public-private sector interaction reviewed public-private partnerships in Africa and focused on creating an enabling environment, policies

and engagements important for private sector growth. The findings of the study are also expected to strengthen intra-African investment and trade.

30. A technical publication titled "Reforms of public sector management: lessons learned" served as a working document for an ad hoc expert group meeting on the same theme that was convened in May 2003 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The study reviews the experiences of African and non-African countries with successful civil service reforms and practices. Experiences such as these can help policy makers to improve civil service reform strategies, resulting in more effective and efficient public services in African countries.

31. The ECA has organized and participated in a number of seminars and workshops on monitoring administrative governance and improving the public sector performance. These have included workshops on ethics and accountability for improved efficiency and performance in the public sector (Uganda, 2000), on globalization, governance, and the public sector (South Africa, 2000), and on election monitoring: an early warning perspective and a governance capacity-building strategy (Morocco, 2001). Though it is a regional advisory service, ECA has provided expertise on enhancing capacity-building through reports, lectures and advice to a number of African countries including the following: public service management programme in Swaziland, 2001; public sector management reforms in Ghana and Nigeria, 2001; and implementation of the African public service charter in Namibia, 2001.

B. Economic Commission for Europe

32. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has contributed significantly to improvements in the capacity of the public sector of its member States to respond to the challenges and opportunities of new information and communication technology (ICT). In particular, ECE created a database of training focal points and resource centres to strengthen the use of ICT in public administration (the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN) for Central and Eastern Europe) and has recently updated and extended this database.

33. ECE has established a network of 51 national focal points (called multiplier points) in 25 transition economies. These multiplier points promote, distribute and translate the Commission's recommendations, norms, guidelines, documents and other sources of information on its work for the benefit of the many potential beneficiaries in Member States with economies in transition.

34. The United Nations electronic Trade Document (UNeDocs) project is an activity of the ECE to provide capacity-building and tools for the development of national trade documentation systems aligned to international standards and best practices. UNeDocs enables countries to implement an integrated paper and electronic trade document solution and to access advanced supply chain scenarios.

35. ECE has established the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Alliance to promote sustainable development. A principal aim of the PPP Alliance's programme is to assist Governments in creating within their public administrations special departments, called PPP Units, to prepare projects, coordinate policy and assist local authorities with their implementation. The ECE programme seeks to promote the establishment of PPP Units that implement the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs) of poverty alleviation and sustainable development. To this end the PPP Alliance also cooperates with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) by bringing together PPP Units in Europe with their counterparts in Asia to cooperate in helping PPP Units to deliver pro-poor infrastructure services. The ECE Alliance programme also seeks to improve practices surrounding the process of competitive tendering, including the incorporation of Millennium Development Goals into the criteria of project selection.

36. The ECE Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development has contributed to improving the capacity of public administrations to implement the goals of the Millennium Declaration through a number of initiatives. At its second session in March 2001, the Working Party established a Team of Specialists on Entrepreneurship in Poverty Alleviation. The Team's activities include (i) assisting Governments, at their request, in the design of income-generating, entrepreneurial programmes; (ii) reviewing the impact of normative acts, regulations and policies intended to promote entrepreneurial activities and to assess their impact on the poor and on vulnerable groups; and (iii) identifying policy instruments that are proven to be effective and efficient in reducing poverty and social inequality through entrepreneurial activity. At its second meeting, the Team of Specialists decided to focus its activities on youth entrepreneurship as a means of eradicating unemployment and poverty among this vulnerable stratum of population. In August 2002, the Team of Specialists organized the first Regional Forum on Youth: Security, Opportunity and Prosperity, which put forward a number of recommendations to ECE.

Development of statistical indicators

37. Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals requires some measure of progress made towards them. Establishment of national monitoring systems, with quantitative targets and related statistical indicators, is thus of paramount importance. Public administration has an important role to play, through the national system of official statistics. Responding to an initiative of DESA to encourage national reporting on progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the Statistical Division of ECE is working jointly with the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States to improve statistics in ECE member countries and to publicize best statistical practices used by country teams in the production of reports on the Millennium Development Goals.

38. The main target for this effort consists of countries with economies in transition, specifically those in Southeast Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. This action to improve statistics for the Millennium Development Goals has been organized in coordination with a broader ECE/UNDP project on the development of indicators for the monitoring of social trends and human development reporting.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

39. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has incorporated the Millennium Declaration guidelines into its work plan. Poverty-

reduction policies, national and regional cooperation mechanisms and linking economic with sustainable development and environmental strategies are clearly three priorities that link to all its activities, particularly in its 2002-2003 programme.

40. ECLAC has broad experience in Latin America and the Caribbean concerning information and database compilation and in providing technical assistance and support to countries of the region on this regard. The Programme for the Improvement of Surveys and the Measurement of Living Conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean (MECOVI) constitutes one of its success stories, and ECLAC intends to extend it to other areas beyond poverty analysis, including the possibility of making the information comparable among countries and exchanging lessons learned.

41. ECLAC, in collaboration with UNDP and the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) of Brazil, carried out in 2002 an evaluation of the possibility of attaining the goal of poverty reduction in Latin America through an innovative methodology. Experts on social matters of these institutions evaluated the trends and scenarios of 18 countries of Latin America related to several poverty reduction indicators, compared them to the Millennium Development Goals, and explored the impact of different policy instruments in reducing poverty. The results of this work are presented in a joint publication entitled *Meeting the Millennium Poverty Targets in Latin America and the Caribbean*, published in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese in December 2002 (Libros de la CEPAL # 70, ISBN 92-1-121379-7).

42. One of the main challenges that ECLAC believes countries of the region will face is the lack of sound, reliable and comparable statistical data, indispensable for analysing relevant information and for formulating adequate policies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. To address these issues, ECLAC signed a Letter of Intent with UNDP, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) in June 2002 with the objective of supporting, in a coordinated manner, Latin American and Caribbean countries in the evaluation and monitoring of progress and for reviewing best practices to reach such goals.

43. In addition to the above inter-agency initiatives, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC established an inter-divisional task force with the purpose of articulating its policy research and technical cooperation activities around the Millennium Development Goals related mainly to social development, sustainable development, population and gender.

44. Regarding gender indicators, since October 2000 the Unit for Women and Development and the Division for Statistics and Economic Projections have been implementing, with the financial support of the Government of Italy, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a project entitled: Making Gender Indicators Available for Policy-Making. The project's objectives are to build an integrated and flexible system of gender indicators, as well as strengthen the capacity of countries in the region to use gender indicators in the design of public policies. This project is therefore directly linked to Millennium Development Goal number 3.

45. In the area of sustainable development, progress has been achieved in the identification of more precise indicators related to the loss of natural resources, complementing the Millennium Development Goals with the recent agreements of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). In addition, ECLAC,

together with UNDP and other United Nations agencies, is identifying the situation of existing data for the indicators already defined in targets 10 and 11 at the global level that can be applied by countries in their efforts towards monitoring progress at the national level.

46. In an effort to contribute to the dissemination of information on the regional follow-up to the Millennium Declaration, ECLAC is designing a regional web site for the Millennium Development Goals. In addition to portraying the inter-divisional work carried out by ECLAC, this tool will allow dissemination of relevant links to other United Nations and regional agencies. The web site will have links to global sites and to the ECLAC web site on regional follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits. Both web sites were launched in June 2003, during the Fourth Regional Meeting of United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination.

47. In addition to the individual and inter-agency initiatives already outlined, ECLAC participates in the United Nations Millennium Project coordinated by Dr. Jeffrey Sachs and UNDP, particularly in the Task Forces on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development, and is prepared to contribute to the Regional Interagency Reports to be coordinated by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and DESA.

D. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

48. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is committed to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration through public administration development, among other development issues. This commitment is reflected in numerous activities.

49. ESCWA is the regional node for the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN). In 2001, ESCWA established an Ad Hoc Committee on Public Administration Development with the mandate to draft a plan for ESCWA actions in the field of public administration in the region. In 2002, ESCWA launched the ESCWA-PAN web site, which has been used by the Commission to establish contacts in member countries in the field of public administration, public finance and information technology (IT) sectors.

50. Accurate and timely statistics are necessary if Governments are to know how they are progressing towards fulfilment of the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration. ESCWA has offered technical cooperation to its member countries by training and advising on the adoption of the 1993 version of the System of National Accounts (SNA93), by reviewing accomplishments of Governments in moving to SNA93, and by reviewing economic survey questionnaires. In 2002, ESCWA participated in a meeting on national statistics development that focused on SNA93.

51. ESCWA has helped member countries to promote the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a way of strengthening public administration. The regional commission provided technical assistance to Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Syria and Yemen in the elaboration of a national framework and policies for the digitization of public administration, including networking between government institutions. It has advised ministries and public institutions in Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Syria, Yemen and United Arab Emirates on selection of technologies for creating an enabling administrative environment by

improving their ICT infrastructure with applications that improve efficiency and offer clients a better service. Addressing the shortage of personnel trained in ICT, ESCWA has devised training programmes in basic and professional skills for public servants in Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

52. In the year 2002, ESCWA organized two meetings on new developments in ICT, including one organized jointly with the International Labour Organization (ILO), which focused on the role of ICT in the alleviation of poverty. The Commission held another meeting on ICT in February of 2003. In response to the recommendations of these forums, ESCWA is spearheading the implementation of a Regional Agenda for Action aimed at harnessing new technologies for employment creation and poverty reduction. The Agenda focuses on the delivery of literacy programmes and vocational training using new technologies to enhance the competitiveness of small enterprises in disadvantaged areas. Pilot multipurpose community centres are being designed for this purpose.

53. ESCWA has long worked with the public sector of member countries to address social issues at the core of the Millennium Development Goals. More specifically, ESCWA has (i) invited member countries to participate in projects on social policies; (ii) advised on the improvement of the treatment of women, and on policies for promotion of the development of women; (iii) advised on developing a questionnaire to evaluate the social condition of families; (iv) advised on leadership management skills; (v) evaluated future needs of higher education institutes according to labour market requirements; and (vi) supported new ministries in planning a system and preparing strategies with regard to technical education and vocational training. ESCWA organized four meetings related to the issue of poverty eradication in 2002 and two additional meetings related to this topic in April of 2003.

IV. United Nations specialized agencies

A. International Labour Organization

54. Initiatives of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to improve the capacity of the public sector in Member States are part of the follow-up to meetings organized under the Sectoral Activities Programme. They complement other ILO programmes and those carried out by the United Nations and other specialized agencies in support of efforts by countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Human Resource Development in the Public Service

55. The Conclusions adopted at the Joint Meeting on Human Resource Development in the Public Service in the Context of Structural Adjustment and Transition (Geneva, 14-18 December 1998) stress that the objectives of public service reforms should be to: (1) achieve good governance, sustainable social development and sound economic growth oriented towards full employment and human resource development; (2) provide equitable access to better services satisfying basic human needs, such as essential health and education, for all citizens and to eliminate poverty; (3) improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service; (4) improve and enhance democracy and the security of human rights;

(5) ensure quality management, transparency and accountability; and (6) safeguard the environment.

56. As part of the follow-up to those Conclusions, ILO began revising, in 2001, the Training Module on Human Resource Management in the Public Service that had been developed in the early 1990s. The revision was completed in 2002. The International Training Centre of ILO in Turin, Italy, is now using the revised module in its training programmes. The revised material contains two new sections: one on workers' participation and another on gender issues. The Training Module targets managers of public service reforms, public service managers involved in reform programmes, and other civil servants involved in a reform process, including advisory staff and representatives of civil service unions, public management trainers or consultants, and public service union representatives.

Decentralization and Privatization

57. In 2001, the Joint Meeting on the Impact of Decentralization and Privatization on Municipal Services (Geneva, 15-19 October 2001) adopted Conclusions emphasizing that public service reforms must be guided by the following basic principles: (1) accountability, transparency and openness of government policies and actions, specifically including structures and procedures to ensure the integrity of government programmes and procurement; (2) provision of new or better public services; (3) maintenance of good working conditions and core labour standards during the reform process for the sake of morale and performance of public service and municipal workers; (4) social dialogue with all relevant stakeholders as a prerequisite for designing, implementing and evaluating decentralization and privatization; (5) adequate resources and training to facilitate informed decision-making; (6) appreciation of the value of diverse communities and cultures; and (7) assurance of equality of opportunity for all.

58. As a follow-up to the Joint Meeting, which called on ILO to promote social dialogue at all levels in the context of the reform process, a Practical Guide for Strengthening Social Dialogue in Public Service Reform is being prepared. It will be tested and validated in national workshops, with results incorporated in a final version of the Practical Guide to be completed by mid-2003. The ILO will make this resource available to constituents for use in social dialogue training.

B. World Bank

59. The World Bank recognizes the need for effective public sector institutions in the context of Country Assistance Strategies, works to improve public administration at many levels, and recently proposed, jointly with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a framework for monitoring progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Country Assistance Strategies

60. The selection and design of activities aimed at improving public sector governance (PSG) are made in the context of Country Assistance Strategies for the World Bank's client countries. The Bank's Country Assistance Strategies are mandated to take the Millennium Development Goals into consideration, as these have been adopted, adjusted and expanded by the Governments in question.

Capacity-building in the public sector

61. The World Bank approaches capacity-building in the public sector at different levels and through flexible means. It is important to secure an explicit link between capacity-building, institutional development and reform of public sector governance (PSG). The underlying thrust of country-owned and country-led partnerships is that capacity is needed at all levels and sectors of society, including the main components of the public sector: the legislature, the executive, the judiciary, as well as civil society and the private sector.

62. To minimize the risk that "capacity strengthening" might be equated with "development", the World Bank pursues capacity-building differently for individuals, organizations and society at large. The means include education, skills development and work conditions of individuals; management, leadership and incentives in organizations; and PSG reform and systems development for full-scale institutional change. The key to effective capacity-building is to apply these tools differently in accordance with institutional capacities and governance characteristics of individual client countries.

63. Along the continuum from weak to strong capacity and performance, the scope increases for the World Bank to support individual, organizational and systemic capacity-building, respectively. Different forms of pro-active capacity-building are needed and possible in countries all along the capacity continuum. In most client countries, the World Bank is now pursuing broad PSG reforms through strengthening public financial management, public administration and accountability, and institutional checks and balances.

Monitoring achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

64. The World Bank and the IMF presented to the Development Committee, at its 13 April 2003 meeting, a joint report entitled "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Related Outcomes: A Framework for Monitoring Policies and Actions". The proposal is very relevant in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for two reasons. First, the policies and actions considered embrace those of the Governments of developed countries, developing countries and international financial institutions, i.e., a very large part of the global public sector. The policies considered for developing countries are outputs of their public sector relevant for the achievement of the MDGs. Second, the framework suggests indicators to monitor improvements in public sector governance. The report notes, "Given the importance attached to the quality of governance, the development of robust and objective metrics — and consensus around them — warrants special emphasis in the work ahead." The main report and a longer, technical addendum are posted at:

http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/DCS/DevCom.nsf/(documentsattachmentsweb)/April2003EnglishDC20030003/$FILE/DC2003-0003.pdf and

http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/DCS/DevCom.nsf/(documentsattachmentsweb)/April2003EnglishDC20030003Add.1/$FILE/DC2003-0003-Add.1all.pdf respectively.

Innovative and successful practices

65. The following are examples of innovative and successful practices implemented in World Bank-supported operations across the world with the goal of strengthening and improving the performance of the public sector:

- Creation of anti-corruption and ombudsman bodies in Latin America (Argentina, Paraguay and Peru).
- Judicial reform in Guatemala: Working with a pro-active Supreme Court, an Anti-Corruption Commission and Department of Judicial Supervision have become operational; a Code of Ethics has been drafted; and an incentive/deterrence system has been established.
- Public expenditure accountability in Ghana: A broad consultative approach with multi-donor support identified entry-points to modernize budget and expenditure management, procurement and auditing, within the Government capacity.
- Transparency measures in the forestry sector in Brazil, Cameroon and Russia and in water and electricity in Gabon: In forestry, development cooperation is increasingly focusing on improvements in governance, particularly transparent allocation and effective enforcement of concessions. In Gabon, the water and electricity body was privatized through a fully transparent process.
- Public expenditure tracking surveys in the education sector in Uganda: Surveys increase public awareness of problems in budget execution, including delays, leakages, shortfalls, and capture by vested interests, and hence support a demand for effective budget execution.
- E-governance in Andhra Pradesh: Decentralization is facilitated by SMART (simple, moral, accountable, responsible and transparent) governance through the use of the Internet to implement such reforms as "one-stop shops for citizen services" and digital registration of deeds.
- Increasing accountability and efficiency in Latvia: Strengthening Government capacity for strategic planning, transparency, incentives, internal control, participation and oversight has helped reduce state capture and corruption.
- Improved service delivery in Jordan: Capacity-building in seven service delivery ministries through simplification of procedures, clarification of the legal framework, introduction of e-government, and civil service reform.
- Local empowerment and governance in Indonesia: Local development programme that emphasizes the dissemination of information and the empowerment of communities, and which reaches half of the country.

Each of these operations includes innovative approaches that have made good use of a variety of entry-points, although major challenges remain in addressing vested interests and in sustaining and scaling up activities.

C. International Monetary Fund

66. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has long worked to strengthen and to improve the capacity of the public sector to reduce poverty and meet other

Millennium Development Goals. Recent initiatives include a Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF), relief for highly indebted poor countries, and technical assistance to low and middle-income countries.

Poverty Reduction Growth Facility

67. The IMF introduced the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) in November of 1999, ten months before the United Nations Millennium Summit was convened. The aim of PRGF-supported programmes, drawn from countries' Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) is to achieve the durable growth and poverty reduction needed to meet the Millennium Development Goals. A key feature of PRGF-supported programmes is more pro-poor and pro-growth budgets, guided by the countries' priorities as elaborated in their PRSPs.

68. PRGF-supported programmes seek to increase outlays and the share of the budget allocated for poverty-reducing activities, thus fostering progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals. For example, poverty-reducing spending in countries with PRGF-supported programmes rose, on average, from 6¾ per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1999 to 8½ per cent of GDP in 2001, and is projected to increase further to 9 per cent of GDP in 2002/03. Poverty-reducing spending is also rising in relation to total expenditure in PRGF-supported countries.

69. To support higher spending on poverty reduction, fiscal frameworks are more flexible under PRGF-supported programmes. Budget deficits (before external grants) are targeted to increase modestly by about ½ per cent of GDP under PRGF-supported programmes (compared to the pre-PRGF year), thus accommodating higher public expenditure.

70. To monitor the shift of public spending towards poverty-reducing activities, PRGF-supported programmes contain actions intended to help countries improve their public expenditure management (PEM) systems and to strengthen accountability. This is essential in order to ensure that public funds, especially those funds earmarked for poverty-reducing activities, are used for their intended purposes.

Relief for heavily indebted poor countries

71. For heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) receiving relief under the HIPC Initiative, the IMF has focused additional attention on improving the tracking of poverty-reducing expenditure. In conjunction with the World Bank and country authorities, action plans have been designed in 24 HIPCs to strengthen the tracking of poverty-reducing public expenditure in both the short and medium term. The action plans place strong emphasis on identifying and reporting budgeted and actual outlays for poverty reduction, allowing HIPCs to better monitor the allocation of spending towards poverty-reducing activities. An assessment of progress in improving the capacity to track poverty reducing spending in these countries will be undertaken by the IMF and World Bank in 2004.

Technical assistance

72. The IMF supports both low- and middle-income countries' efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals by providing an active programme of technical assistance to improve the capacity of the public sector. Beyond expenditure issues,

technical assistance covers areas such as tax policy and tax administration, which is essential to generating the resources needed to finance the poverty-reducing spending, needed to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

V. Innovations and areas of common interest

73. Much of the work of international agencies addresses the issue of capacity-building of the public sector to help achieve the goals set by the Millennium Declaration. The very social and/or poverty orientation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) warranted innovations, search tools and institutional strategies that are conducive to analytical and a more engaging and open public sector. Four areas are attracting widespread attention: (i) decentralization; (ii) transparency and accountability; (iii) engaged governance; and (iv) application of information and communication technology (ICT). In addition, a great deal of attention is also being given to the aspect of capacity-building in statistical systems and operations.

74. It is evident that each of these capacity-building areas influences and reinforces each other. This is abundantly clear in the case of decentralization, which has the potential to impact positively on transparency, accountability and engaged governance, and is in turn facilitated by modern information and communication technologies. The World Bank's experience in Andhra Pradesh, India, reveals how people-friendly decentralization with SMART (simple, moral, accountable, responsible and transparent) governance, makes use of the Internet to implement reforms such as "one-stop shops for citizen services", digital registration of deeds, etc.

75. Increasingly, citizens are demanding greater transparency and accountability, calling for public administration that serves the people, and not the other way around. Governments at all levels have responded by designing and strengthening institutions, systems and structures to better meet these expectations. E-government, the application of ICT to public administration, can be a useful tool for implementing the reform process.

76. Engaged governance is another tool that can be effective in linking social capital to development management, by empowering civil society institutions, citizens, etc. to play an effective role in major policy initiatives, including the Millennium Development Goals. In many countries, policy-making now involves the direct participation of a wide spectrum of civil society institutions, and is no longer confined to representative government. United Nations departments and agencies support these efforts by encouraging participation of representatives of the private sector, civil society and all levels of government in the meetings and workshops they convene. Support is sometimes provided with technical assistance as well.

77. United Nations bodies are particularly active in promoting the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for reforming public administration by facilitating decentralization, transparency, accountability, and direct participation by civil society. E-government brings many possibilities for the improvement of public administration, in particular, and governance in general, but there is also a high risk of failure in its implementation if institutional and human

resource needs are not addressed. For this reason, technical assistance to developing countries is essential if they are to make effective use of this new tool.

78. These areas of common interest demonstrate that they are interrelated and that success in one has the potential to contribute to the success of the other, and vice versa. If delivered as a comprehensive package, these four reform instruments tend to reinforce each other to transform traditional public administration into a public sector that places more emphasis on participation and partnership, openness and transparency and information accessibility to ensure efficiency in service delivery. Continuous lesson-learning at the international level and action research is seen as an essential element in building capacities and reforming public administration.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

79. **The introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), challenges of globalization and liberalization and indeed, citizens' clamour for more say in public policy, is creating impulses for change. The initiatives listed above underscore this trend and highlight the fact that public administration is very much a part of this change and is going through a process of evolution. The changes are most pronounced in the area of partnerships and participation in policy-making, reorientation of planning methods and procedures to focus on poverty-oriented planning, the creation of an enabling environment to encourage private-public partnerships in investment and trade, improved coordination, monitoring and evaluation etc. Not unexpectedly, these changes require introduction of new tools and techniques and indeed, new skills. Therefore, what is urgently needed is a realization within Governments that the achievement of MDGs will be difficult to pursue without major institutional and methodological adjustments and that a great deal of human resource development and capacity-building of the public institutions will be needed to support the change. The international agencies and the donor community, including the United Nations, need to be fully aware of and committed to these requirements of change.**

80. **This document records several initiatives that are already under way and helping Member States cope with change and position them better to achieve the MDGs. A greater analysis of these initiatives and a wider sharing of information of the outcomes of these initiatives are important. The Member States will also need technical support to pilot and experiment with some of these new initiatives. United Nations can play a pioneering role in information exchange and provide technical support for action research.**

81. **Therefore, the United Nations could further support information exchange and research on successful practices in public administration that contribute to achieving the MDGs. This support could extend to promote South-South cooperation through technical cooperation. Efforts of all concerned departments, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system need to be coordinated through existing inter-secretariat and inter-agency mechanisms.**